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WOODROW WILSON MEMORIAL
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT ACT

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 1998

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce legislation that would authorize full federal funding for the replacement of the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge.

As many of my colleagues know, the present bridge is in a serious state of disrepair and is one of the worst traffic bottlenecks in the metropolitan region. It is also the most troubled link on the east coast interstate corridor. Designed to carry 70,000 cars and trucks per day the bridge now carries 175,000 vehicles per day. By the year 2020, Federal Highway Administration estimates a 67 percent increase in vehicle traffic with up to 300,000 vehicles per day crossing the bridge. The future capacity needs alone should make the construction of a new crossing urgent.

Coupled with the capacity concerns, however, is the rapidly deteriorating condition of the present bridge. Federal and state highway engineers have determined that the useful life of the present bridge is less than six years. The underpinnings and supports of the bridge are literally crumbling into the Potomac River. The Federal Highway Administration has warned that at some point in the near future, it will need to restrict traffic on the bridge and would likely ban truck traffic for engineering and safety reasons.

While I would have favored replacing the present bridge with a tunnel, I recognize that there is not enough money in the federal highway program to support such a costly undertaking. There should, however, be sufficient funds for the Federal Government to meet its responsibility to pay for a replacement bridge. The bridge is owned by the Federal Government and will remain a federal liability until the funds are made available to replace it with a new bridge. At that time, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland are prepared to assume

ownership and all future maintenance of this bridge through a multi-state authority.

I am deeply concerned that without a significant increase in the amount of federal funds pledged to build a new bridge, no significant progress will be made. My proposal authorizes full federal funding for the replacement bridge, the connecting interchanges and approaches. It also seeks to address some of the concerns raised by the affected community that endure the current congestion and traffic and will suffer from a bridge construction project that may last up to nine years. The legislation, therefore also seeks to address their concerns by ensuring that there is:

(1) Progress on an additional southern Potomac River crossing, (2) a restriction on tolls, (3) a restriction on the width of the bridge, (4) a limitation on the total number of operational lanes, (5) a requirement that the final two lanes be reserved exclusively for High Occupancy Vehicle lanes and/or mass transit, and (6) an enforcement mechanism to ensure that both the State and Federal Governments honor the mitigation commitments outlined in the Record of Decision.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this legislation reflects a compromise on what must be done to get a replacement bridge built.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL REDMOND

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 1998

Mr. REDMOND. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from the floor, from Wednesday, March 11, through Friday, March 13 because I was attending my daughter's graduation from the Defense Languages Institute in Monterey, California.

What follows is a list of the votes I missed and how I would have voted had I been here:

Roll call #43 (H. Res. 383)—yes.

Roll call #44 (amendment to H.R. 1432)—no.

Roll call #45 (amendment to H.R. 1432)—yes.

Roll call #46 (amendment to H.R. 1432)—no.

Roll call #47 (final passage of H.R. 1432)—yes.

Roll call #48 (H. Res. 384)—yes.

Roll call #49 (Journal)—yes.

Roll call #50 (H.R. 2883)—yes.

Roll call #51 (amendment to H.R. 992)—no.

Roll call #52 (final passage of H.R. 992)—yes.

TRIBUTE TO MR. AND MRS. FERDINAND AND CARRIE HATFIELD PEARSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 1998

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ferdinand and Carrie Hatfield Pearson of Clarendon County, South Carolina, on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

The Pearsons were married on February 28, 1948, in Manning, South Carolina. Their marriage is the kind we all wish to experience, one which has trials and tribulations throughout the years and which grows even stronger and more committed with each one. The Pearson's marriage has produced six children: Jerome Pearson (deceased), Alfreda Pearson, Grace Pearson Waters, Cynthia Pearson Felder, Ferdinand Pearson, Jr., and Timothy Pearson.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Pearson are dedicated members of their community. Ferdinand Pearson is a very active and senior member in the political arena of Clarendon County, as well as with the National Association of Colored People (NAACP) and the American Legion Post. Mr. Pearson has proven to be a model citizen both at home and abroad. Carrie Hatfield Pearson is a senior member of the Eastern Stars, as well as the Jordan Community Club and several churches. Her priorities have indicated a wealth of inner strength and charisma. Ms. Pearson puts God first, and she supports her family's needs and hopes as she helps to guide them through the phases of life. She is always attentive to the ways in which the community can be improved, and she encourages the youth to strive for excellence and high self-esteem.

Please join me in warmly wishing Mr. and Mrs. Pearson a very happy fiftieth anniversary, and in congratulating them for the inspiring example which they set for all of us